

Conducting Virtual Review Panels

for Grant Applications in the District of Columbia



GOVERNMENT OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

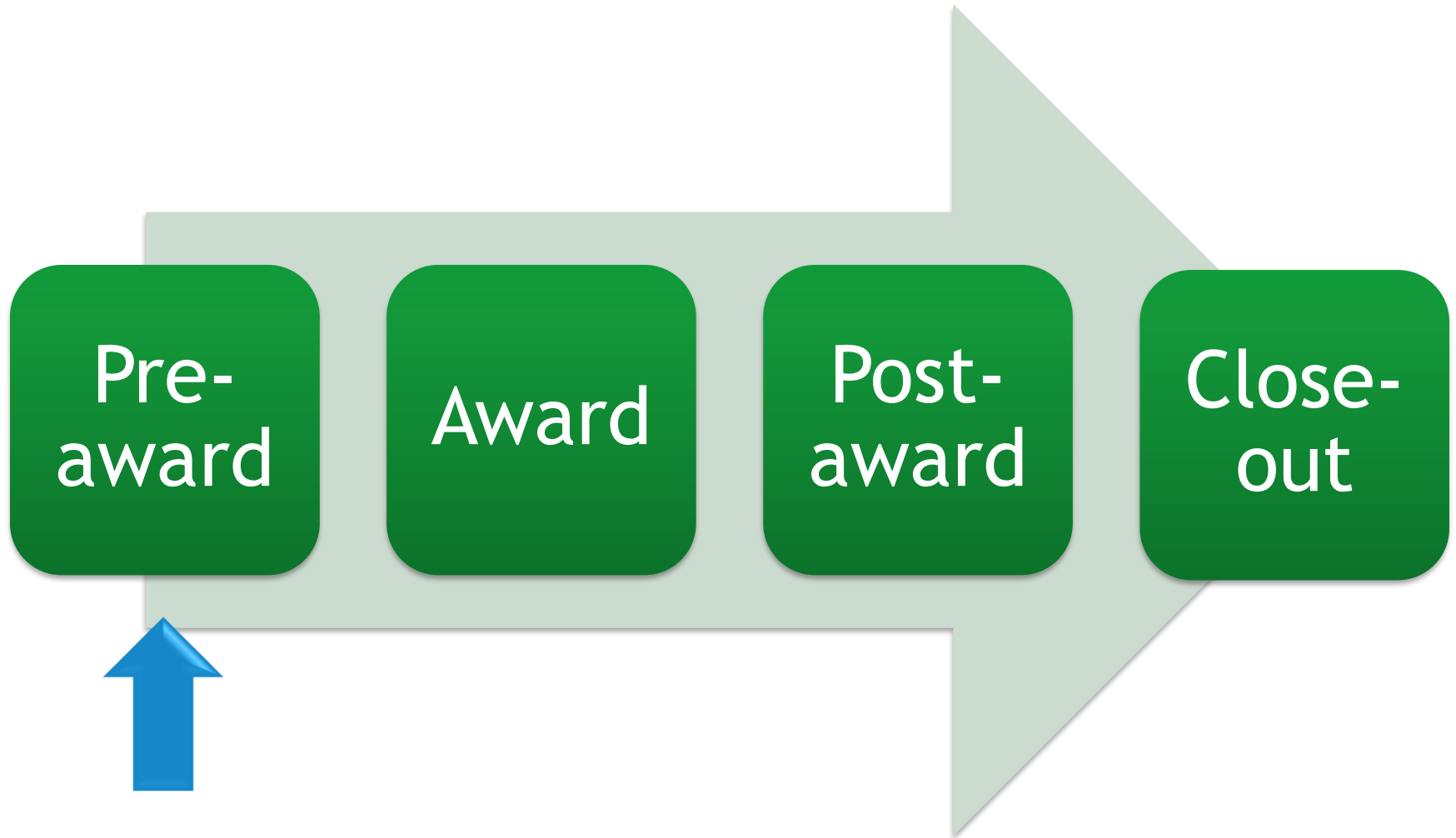
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Agenda

- 1 Why review panels are used in the District of Columbia
- 2 What are best practices for conducting a review panel
- 3 How to develop a scoring rubric
- 4 How to prep the review panel
- 5 How to conduct the review panel meeting
- 6 What are the review panel coordinator's responsibilities

Grants Lifecycle



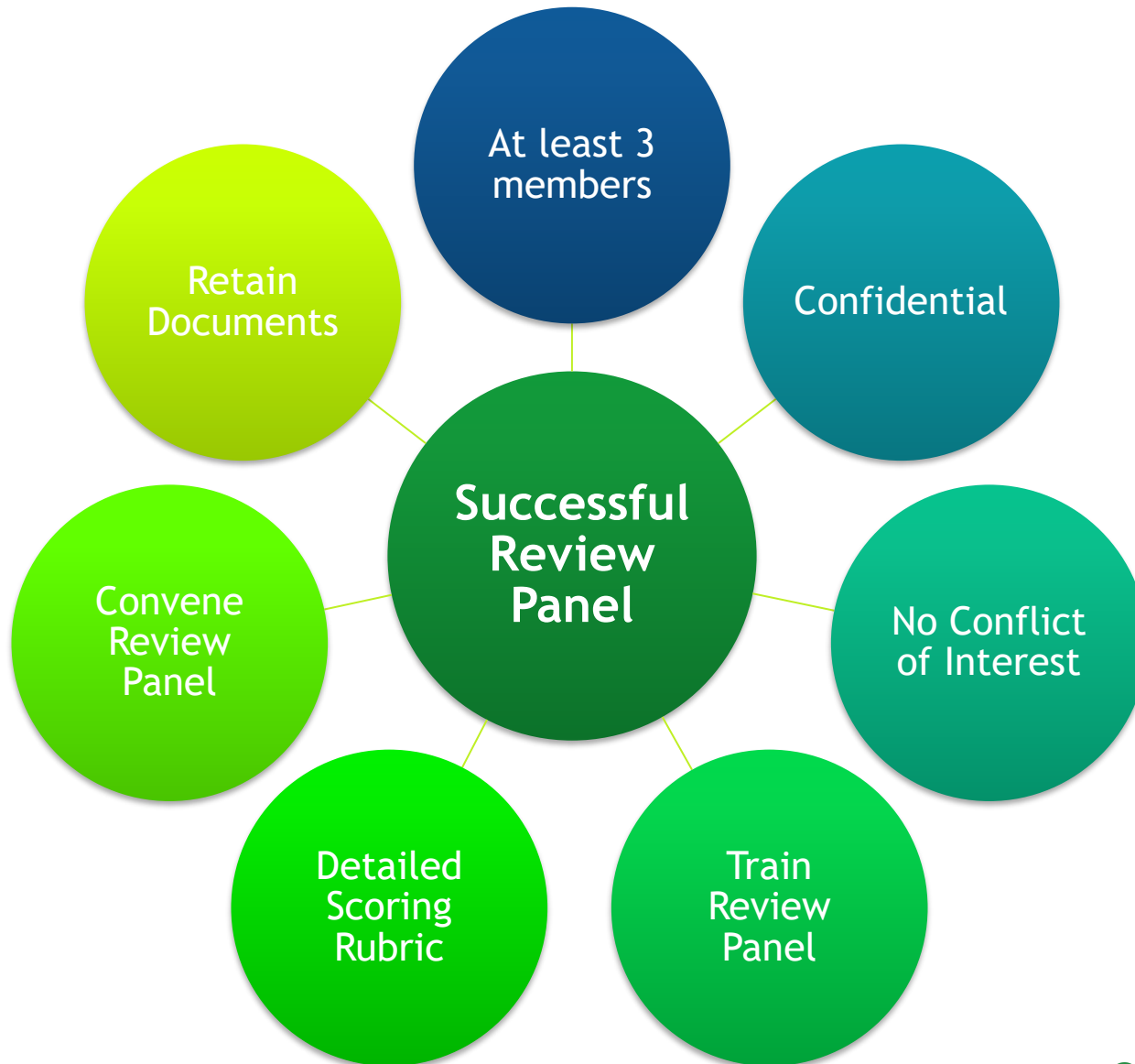
Why a Review Panel?

Separate the grant's project management function from the grantee selection process

Ensure a fair, unbiased, and transparent system for selecting the best application

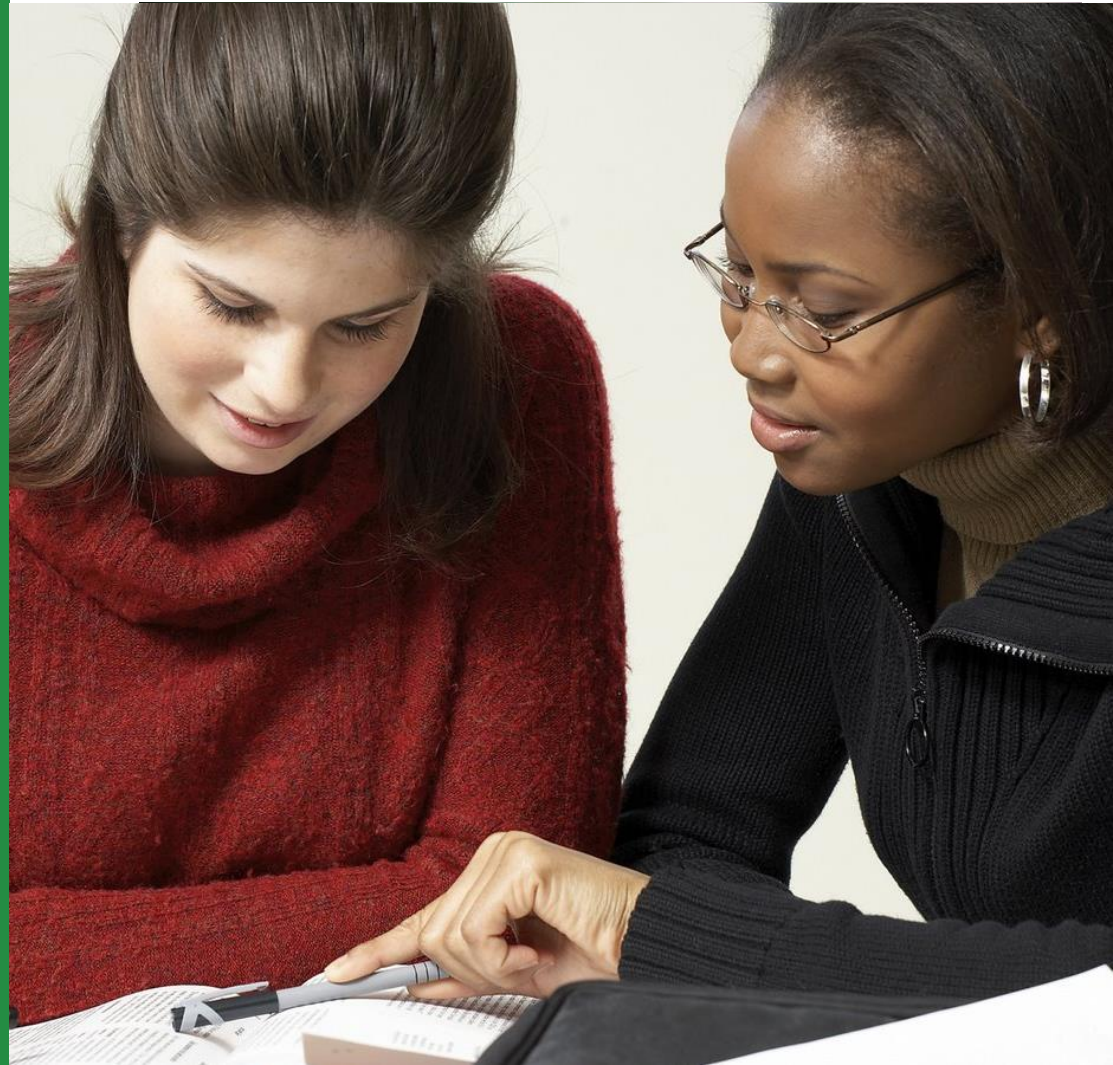


Review Panel Best Practices



Selecting a Review Panel

- Do people have time to provide a thorough review?
- Will the person take the responsibility seriously?
- Is there a conflict of interest?
- Do you have one reviewer from outside your agency?
- Do you have diverse opinions?



Confidentiality Form

RFA Application Review Team Statement of Confidentiality

I, the undersigned, serving as a member of the review team for the (Insert RFA Name), published on (Insert publication date), agree that the proceedings of the Review Team and information submitted by the applicants shall be regarded as confidential.

In practice, this means that access to applications, attachments, scores, and comments is limited to members of the review team. Deliberations and recommendations will not be discussed with persons outside the specific authority of the Grants Administrator.

Decisions reached by the Review Team are confidential and are made formally through the appropriate department channels.

Print name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Confidentiality and Integrity of the Review Process

I agree to protect the confidentiality and integrity of the review process in all respects. Specifically, until I receive explicit, written permission from the Department to do otherwise:

- I will not announce, confirm, or disclose my selection to the public as a peer reviewer for the Race to the Top Assessment competition, until the Department officially releases that information.
- I will not contact any party, including the originator of an application, concerning the contents of an application, or engage in any discussions regarding Race to the Top Assessment competition with outside individuals, including individuals who prepared or were involved in the preparation of any Race to the Top Assessment application.
- I will not talk to the press or any other media source about my involvement as a peer reviewer.
- I will not read draft or final applications that consortia may have posted online or otherwise seek information about Race to the Top Assessment applications while serving as a peer reviewer.

Conflict of Interest Form

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Department of Energy and Environment

Conflict of Interest Form

The purpose of the Conflict of Interest form is to ensure that each review team member's private financial interests and personal relationships do not conflict with his/her obligation to provide a fair and independent evaluation and score set for the proposal/s being reviewed. In addition, the review team member must also avoid conduct which creates an appearance of conflict of interest, or conduct which creates a reasonable impression that they will act with bias.

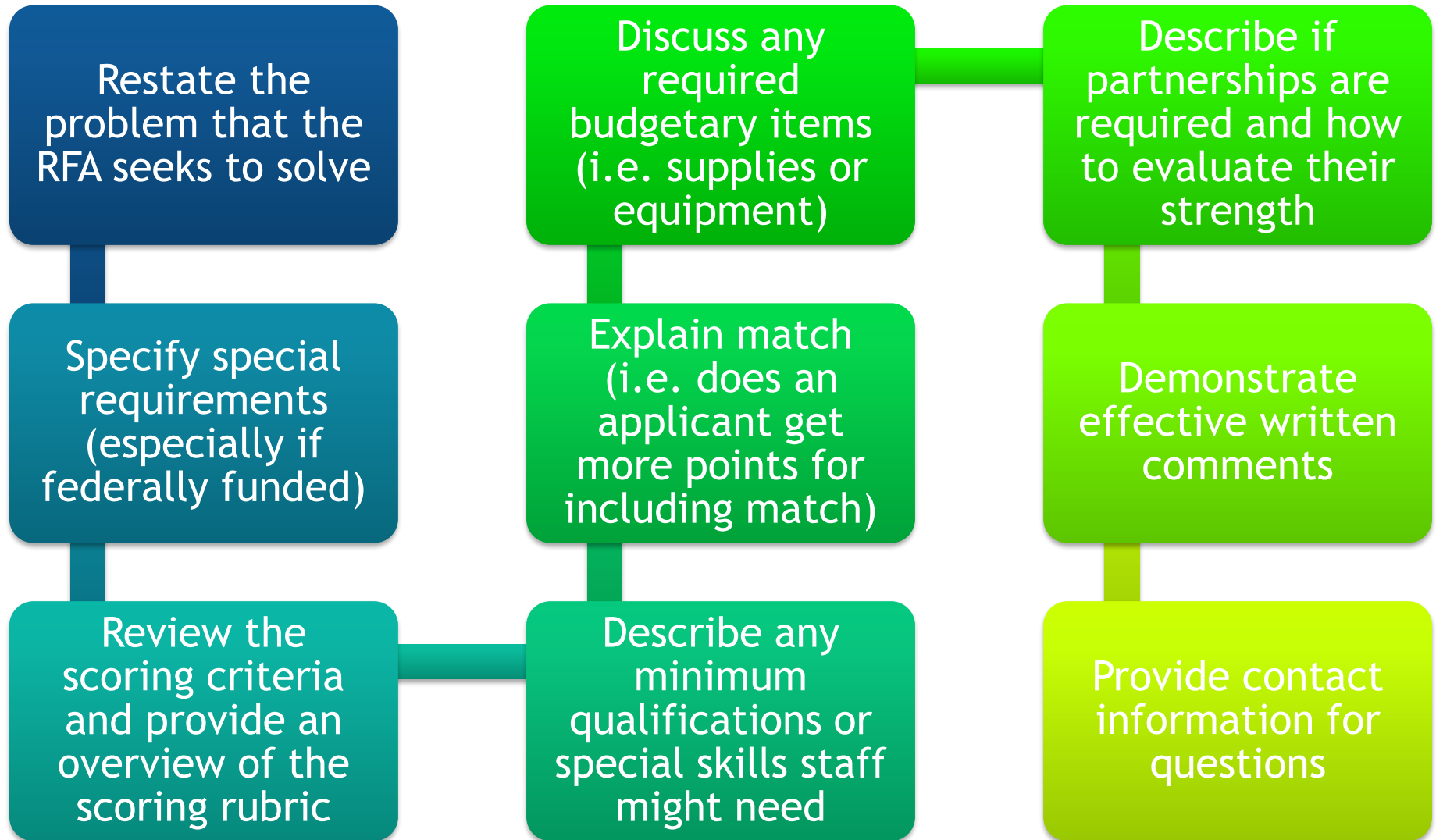
I agree to evaluate the proposal/s listed below, which has/have been submitted to the Department of Energy and Environment for consideration for funding. I agree to use the general evaluation criteria as described in the published Request for Applications (RFA) and the specific scoring rubric itemized in the RFA which corresponds with the proposal/s being evaluated. I do not have any financial or relational conflicts of interest, or the appearance of conflict of interests, regarding the organizations and applications listed below.

Print name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

List the name of the organization/s and title/s of the proposal/s submitted for review, which have been assigned to your review team:

Prepping the Review Panel



How to Create a Scoring Rubric

Outcome or project goal

Criteria	Max Score	Score (x weight)	Comments
Identified Community Need	15		
• Current and relevant data	5		
Project Approach	20		
• Partnerships	5		
Organizational Capacity	20		
• Staff experience	10		
• Past performance	10		
Budget	15		

Scoring the Application

Numeric Rating	Adjective	Description
0	Unacceptable	Fails to meet minimum requirements, e.g., no demonstrated capacity, major deficiencies which are not correctable; applicant did not address the factor.
1	Poor	Marginally meets minimum requirements; major deficiencies which may be correctable.
2	Minimally	Marginally meets minimum requirements; minor deficiencies which may be correctable.
3	Acceptable	Meets requirements; no deficiencies.
4	Good	Meets requirements and exceeds some requirements; no deficiencies.
5	Excellent	Exceeds most, if not all requirements; no deficiencies.

Sample Scoring Rubric

Name of Grant Proposal: _____ Date: _____

PROJECT PROPOSAL

10 Points

- The project offers new and unique programs that responds to a defined need and/or interest.
- The project represent a new or rethink of an existing educational initiative.
- The project explores use and integration of new technology, expands student experiential learning, and/or engages families and/or the community in education.
- The project is clearly described.

_____ / 10 Points

PROJECT GOALS

10 Points

- The proposal offers clearly established procedures to achieve the purpose of the project.
- The appropriately supports district/building goals or advances the district mission and/or diversity statement.
- The project reaches an appropriate number of students and/or other participants.
- The project can be replicated.

_____ / 10 Points

PROJECT METHODS

10 Points

- The proposal clearly outlines a plan to implement the project successfully.
- The project offers to enrich educational experiences and/or curriculum.

_____ / 10 Points

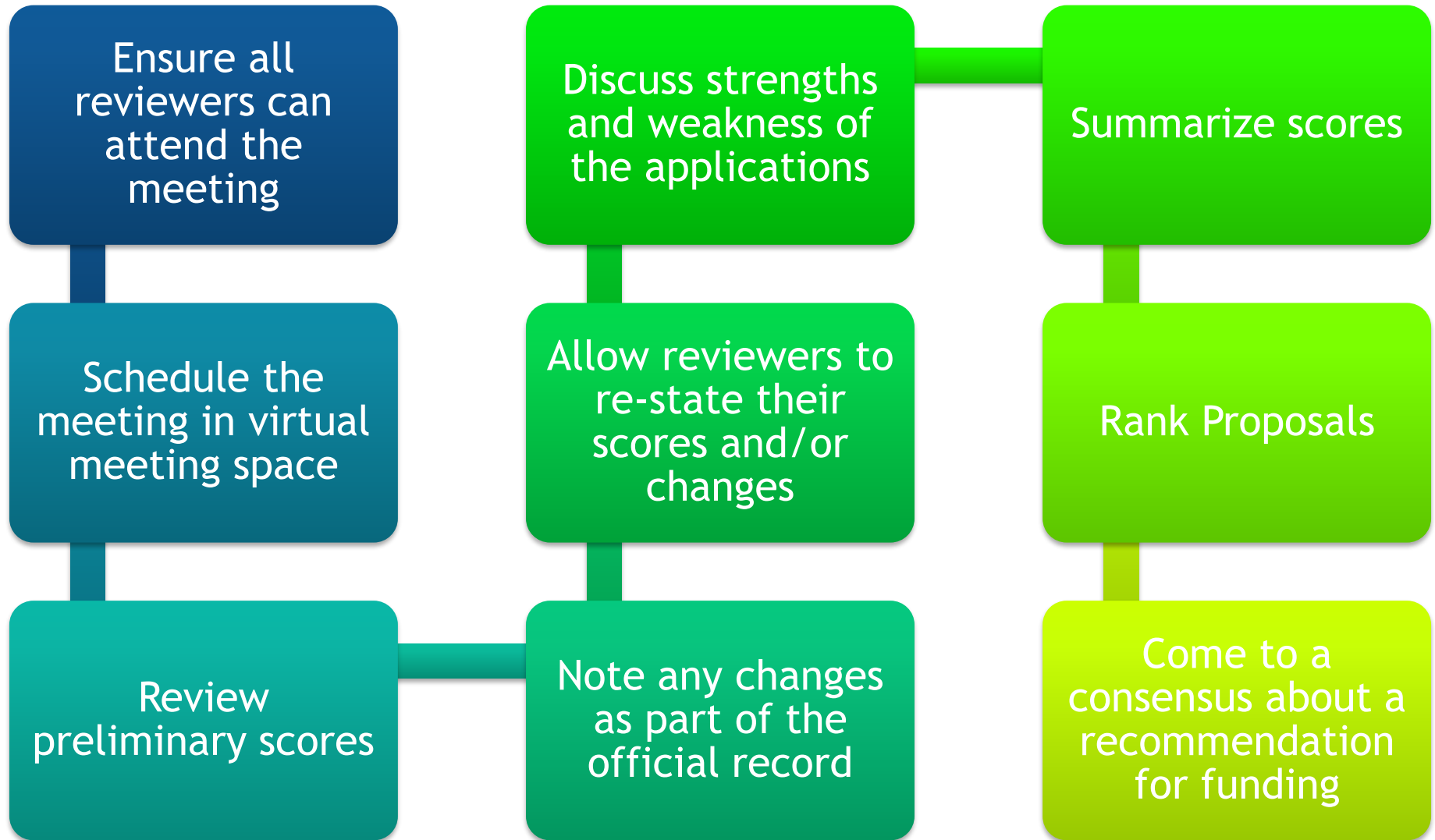
Sample Scoring Rubric

Criterion	4 Exemplary	3 Adequate	1 Needs Improvement	0 Insufficient Evidence	Comments/Notes
Innovation	Project represents the implementation of new insight or idea, with potential benefits of change made clear.	Project represents local implementation of emerging innovation or trend, with potential benefits specified.	Project represents practice(s) commonplace within field, or an adoption of a change with well-established benefits.	No innovation described or specific potential improvement defined.	
Justification	Strong rationale and significance of proposed work. Addresses specific need(s) common among peer institutions.	Rationale or significance of project tends toward the too-specific or too-general, but overall argument holds.	Weak presentation of institutional or community need, or tenuous argument for grant's ability to address need.	Unconvincing or no evidence of need presented, or grant proposal does not address stated need.	
Relationship to Organizational Strategic Vision and/or Community's Goals	Project outcomes or activities align with both organizational vision and goals of greater community.	Project elements align with goals of either the organization or its greater community, but not both.	Project tangentially but not directly related to organizational strategic vision or community goals.	No explicit relationship between project and the agenda of its organization or community.	
Feasibility	Personnel, project activities timeline, and budget expenditures congruent with project description and outcomes.	Deficiencies or overestimations exist in personnel, timeline, or budget within tolerable range, outcomes appear achievable despite gaps or leaps.	Project's assembled personnel, timeline, or budget expose weaknesses in plan design. Outcomes unlikely to be achieved in project's current form.	Insufficient information about personnel, project activities timeline, or budget expenditures to gauge feasibility.	

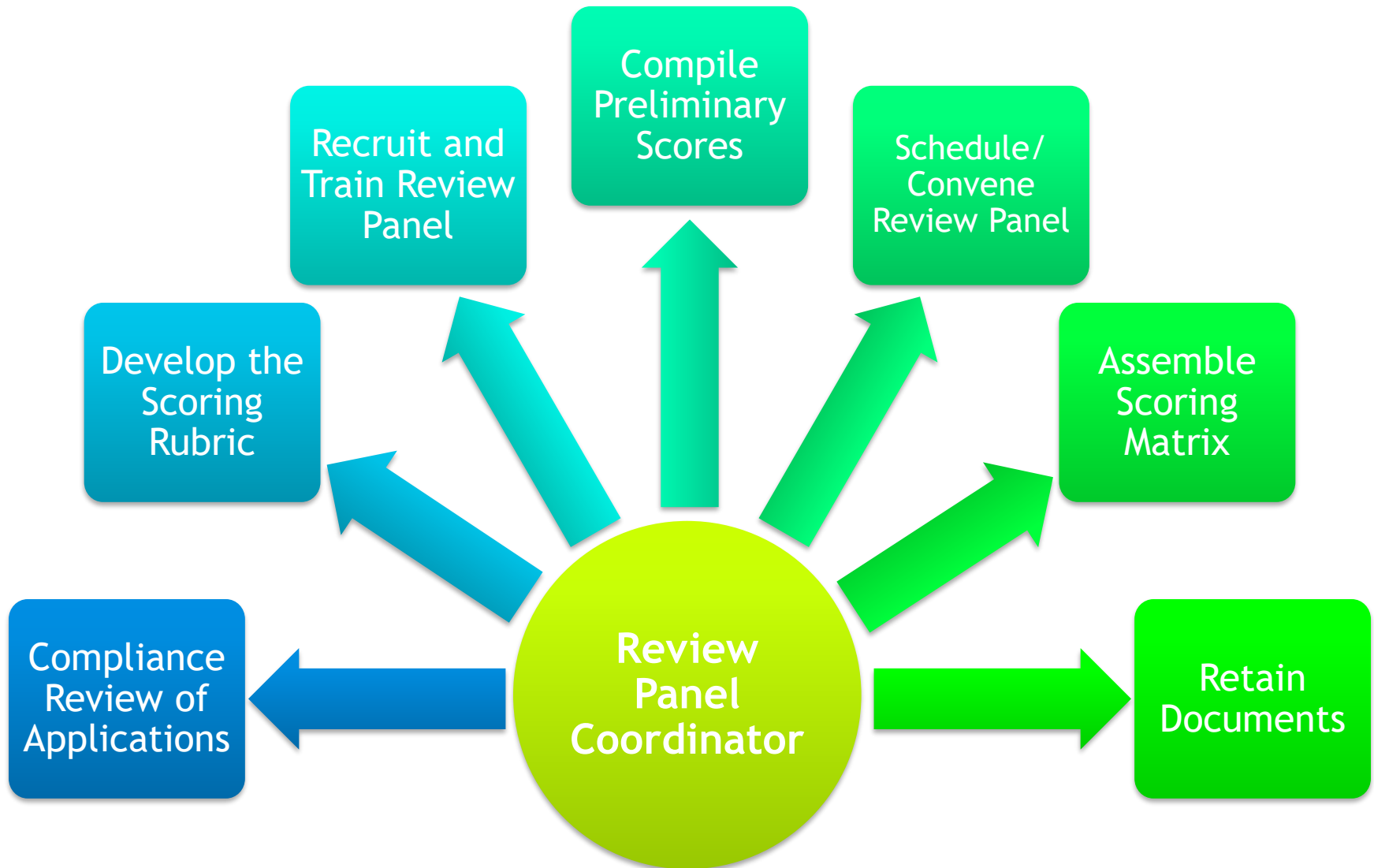
Conducting a Virtual Review Panel Discussion



Conducting a Virtual Review Panel Discussion



Review Panel Coordinator Responsibilities



Sample Scoring Matrix

Trash Free Rivers							
Trash Free Rivers							
Proposing Organization	SCORE 1	SCORE 2	SCORE 3	SCORE 4	Score 5	AVERAGE	NOTES
ABCD Organization	89	52	49	65	60	63	While the recruitment of youth and volunteers from the community was a strong part of the application, the job training was very week and events for volunteers were very week. The application lacked details with regards to how the trash traps would be maintained.
My Test Nonprofit	80	66	69	85	75	75	This project is innovative especially regarding hosting public events. The biggest concern the reviewers have is with staff turnover is there capacity to implement.
Compton Douglas Foundation	87	58	53	72	62	66	This application lacked the technical knowledge regarding data collection. The application failed to describe how the trash would be measured. They also said that they would recruit youth from a local school to participate in volunteer activities but didn't include a letter of support from the school.

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